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Operational activities for development: economic and technical cooperation among developing countries

Advancement of women

Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984.

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Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a review and update on the programme and activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for the year 1998. During the past year, UNIFEM continued to implement its strategy and business plan, which delineates areas of focus and operations for the period 1997–1999, which is designed and guided by an empowerment framework and based on the promotion of women's rights, opportunities and capacities. UNIFEM progressed towards becoming a learning organization and considerably strengthened partnerships within and outside the United Nations system. It also consolidated its resource base, laying the ground for further increases during 1999.

2. In General Assembly resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, UNIFEM was mandated to play an innovative and catalytic role in the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality. Its mandate is: to support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women, in line with national and regional priorities; to serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities; and to play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations system of development cooperation.

3. In paragraph 335 of the Beijing Platform for Action,[1] UNIFEM was requested to review and strengthen its work programme in light of the Platform for Action, focusing on women's economic and political empowerment, and to play an advocacy role, concentrating on fostering a multilateral policy dialogue on women's empowerment.

4. In paragraph 49 of its resolution 51/69 of 12 December 1996, entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action", the General Assembly commended the work of UNIFEM in providing a strategic and focused response to the follow-up and implementation of the Platform for Action through its advocacy and operational activities in support of women's economic and political empowerment and encouraged the Fund to provide technical support to operationalize the Platform for Action at the national level through, *inter alia*, the resident coordinator system, and taking into account decision 1996/43 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund.

II. Programme

A. Overview

5. UNIFEM's programme continued to focus on three thematic areas: strengthening women's economic capacity; engendering governance and leadership; and promoting women's human rights, and the elimination of all forms of violence against women. The three thematic programme areas are addressed in relation to regional realities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and placed within the larger global context. In its work around the three thematic areas, UNIFEM adopted a results-based management approach and the principles of a learning organization.

6. UNIFEM is committed to intensifying support for programmes that link micro-level and macro-level practical and policy actions in its three thematic areas to meet emerging needs and priorities for gender mainstreaming and for building the capacity of women's organizations as economic and political actors.

7. In addition to focusing its programme by concentrating on three thematic areas, UNIFEM continued to play a catalytic role to promote gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system of operational activities and contributed actively to the implementation of the Secretary-General's reform proposals, especially at the field level. In all its activities UNIFEM relies on five core strategies for promoting its empowerment approach: building the capacity and leadership of women's organizations and networks; leveraging political and financial support for women from a range of stakeholders in the development process; forging new synergies and effective partnerships among women's organizations, Governments, the United Nations system and the private sector; undertaking pilot and demonstration projects to test innovative approaches to women's empowerment; and building an operational knowledge base to influence gender mainstreaming.

8. A report on UNIFEM's activities during 1998 was presented to the Consultative Committee for UNIFEM at its thirty-ninth session (25–26 February 1999). The Committee advises the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on all matters affecting the activities of the Fund, in compliance with resolution 39/125.[2]

9. At the conclusion of its meeting, the UNIFEM Consultative Committee conveyed the following recommendations to the Administrator of UNDP. The

guidelines on the operational relationship between UNIFEM and UNDP, which date back to 1987, should be revised in the course of 1999, to reflect the changes that had taken place in both organizations, as well as the principles of the United Nations reform process. In revising the guidelines, the Committee recommends that the relationship and respective roles of the two organizations should be clarified and that the nature of UNIFEM as an autonomous organization working in close association with UNDP should be more clearly defined. The revised guidelines should at the same time seek to formalize and further deepen the synergy between the two organizations. In that regard, the Committee recommended that further consideration be given to making it possible for UNIFEM to execute UNDP projects in the areas of its comparative advantage, taking into consideration that UNIFEM can already execute projects for other United Nations agencies. The Consultative Committee further requested the UNDP Administrator to consider the adoption of the title "regional programme directors" for the UNIFEM regional programme advisors, to better reflect their programming and management responsibilities.

B. Strengthening women's economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers

10. UNIFEM's economic empowerment programme focuses on the identification of opportunities for and threats to women's sustainable livelihoods within the context of the economic crisis that unravelled in several Asian countries in 1997 and took on global proportions in 1998. The combined effects of this and of ongoing armed conflicts and several devastating natural calamities had a disproportionate effect on the most disadvantaged groups of society, also contributing to increased feminization of poverty.

11. UNIFEM supports programmes designed to increase options for women — especially those living in poverty by strengthening their economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers and by creating strategic links between producers and support institutions and between producer groups and markets. Working at the macro (policy), meso (institutional) and micro (households/individual) levels, UNIFEM's aims are to: engender macroeconomic and sectoral level policies (especially trade and information, communication and telecommunications policies) so as to minimize threats to and maximize opportunities for women's sustainable livelihoods; engender public-sector and private-sector extension services/delivery mechanisms so as to ensure that any policy statements of benefit to women are translated into action and that women have access equal to that of men to economic and natural resources; and design innovative and effective ways of overcoming constraints faced by women in gaining access to the resources they need to increase their economic capacity.

Policy-level activities

12. At the macro level UNIFEM has been focusing on engendering trade, science and technology policies and understanding the impact on women of economic trends towards globalization. Activities geared to making national budgets and statistics gender-sensitive also support the attainment of this objective by promoting good governance and gender mainstreaming.

13. In the Southern Cone of Latin America, UNIFEM-supported studies to examine the implications for women of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), led to the creation of a Specialized Group on Women by the Council of Ministers of MERCOSUR. The Group, composed of representatives of women's machineries and non-governmental organizations, advises on the design of public policies for gender equality to be agreed upon and implemented by the signatory countries of the treaty.

14. In the Asia/Pacific region, UNIFEM supported the production of an information briefing kit entitled "Women and the economic crisis", designed to help policy makers understand the gender impact of trade policies. UNIFEM's report on gender and trade in Vanuatu, Tonga, and Fiji, circulated to key ministries and organizations, has increased dialogue between the ministry of trade, women's focal point in governmental departments, trade unions, and women's non-governmental organizations in those countries.

15. In Africa, UNIFEM provided technical assistance to the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to harmonize trade policies in ways that are beneficial to women in the IGAD countries of Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Sudan. A workshop supported by UNIFEM resulted in a joint action plan between the six countries, and the establishment of a Women's Desk in the IGAD secretariat, initially financed by UNIFEM.

16. After the successful campaign to secure an ILO Convention on Home Work in 1996, UNIFEM, in collaboration with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India, and HomeNet (a global network of organizations working with home-based workers), continues to campaign for the Convention to be translated into practice. An example of a key result has been the submission to the Government of India of a draft bill for home-based workers. Additionally, the Indian Government, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, is in the

process of developing a methodology for the incorporation of home-based work into the National Sample Statistical Survey.

17. In the area of gender, science, and technology, UNIFEM supported the Once and Future Action Network (OFAN), an international coalition for gender, science, and technology, to enhance its capacity to promote the implementation of international agreements. UNIFEM also developed a partnership with the Women and Gender Division of UNESCO in strategizing for optimal gender mainstreaming and maintained its working relationship with the Gender Advisory Board (GAB) of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. UNIFEM also conducts a discussion listserve on gender, science and technology among the United Nations focal points, under the WomenWatch initiative. The Fund has also entered into a strong partnership with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to help engender its policies and programmes. Finally, UNIFEM supported the preparation of a chapter on women and information and communication technologies for the *World Report on Women*, to be published by the United Nations in 1999, to highlight gender issues in information technology.

Capacity-building of women's organizations

18. UNIFEM has been providing support to women entrepreneurs to facilitate their access to international markets and increase their rights and bargaining power in the world of commerce. UNIFEM's focus at this level is on engendering public- and private-sector extension services/ delivery mechanisms so as to ensure that any policy statements of benefit to women are translated into action and that women have equal access to economic and natural resources. UNIFEM has been supporting women who operate profitable, full-time, small-scale manufacturing, service, or trading businesses; those who are own-account or self-employed workers (including street vendors and artisans); and those who are wage earners (including home-based workers, domestic and migrant workers).

19. UNIFEM-supported trade fairs for women entrepreneurs in Africa, Asia and Latin America strengthened women's knowledge of international markets, and facilitated the creation of women's networks. In India, UNIFEM supported the Women's International Trade Fair and the production of a directory of women entrepreneurs, resulting in the creation of a South Asian network of women entrepreneurs. In Peru, the First Latin American Indigenous Craftswomen's Fair provided indigenous women from Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia a space to exchange experience and to sell their products. The establishment of the Caribbean Association of Women Entrepreneurs was an outcome of "Megamarket 98", an initiative supported by UNIFEM.

20. UNIFEM worked to strengthen the ability of self-employed women workers involved in such traditional activities as food processing, garment production, and other traditional artisanal activities to access new markets. Business awareness and skills-building workshops, targeting women entrepreneurs, street vendors and domestic workers, were held in Africa, West and Southern Asia and in Latin America. Results linked to the Fund's activities include the formation of a Street Vendors' Union in Africa; the establishment of a network of migrant workers in Sri Lanka, providing women with information on their rights and means to protect them from exploitation; and the legal recognition of the Domestic Workers' Association in Latin America.

21. UNIFEM, as the co-chair with UNDP of the Microcredit Summit of United Nations Agencies, played a lead role within the Microcredit Summit Meeting of Councils, held in New York from 25–27 June 1998. The Secretary-General's report on the "role of microcredit in the eradication of poverty" (A/53/223) pointed out the contribution of UNIFEM and other United Nations agencies in their efforts to increase international support for microcredit. The report also highlighted UNIFEM's role in strengthening grass-roots women's organizations, in facilitating the formation of networks such as "MICROFIN AFRIC" and the International Coalition on Women and Credit, and in promoting microcredit facilities in Latin America.

Micro-level activities

22. At the micro level, UNIFEM helps women to organize around the collection/growing, processing and marketing of products, organizing and networking to enable women to take control of resources, improve their bargaining power at home, in their community and the market place, and influence national economic policies. The focus at this level is on designing innovative and effective ways of increasing women's access to the resources and opportunities they need to increase their economic capacity and documenting and demonstrating these micro-level experiences for use in advocacy work at the macro- and meso- delivery levels.

23. Specific micro-level activities included increased productivity and linkage to markets. A project to develop a model cooperative for garment export that addresses the gender needs of women workers was undertaken in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to develop a viable,

profit-making, export-oriented enterprise. In Nepal, the project on Building Capacity and Autonomy Through Cotton Farming continued to help women gain confidence to solicit governmental and financial support to service their needs. In West Africa, UNIFEM's ongoing shea butter project in Burkina Faso trained over 300 women in improved production techniques and business skills. The project established central marketplaces in strategic areas, allowing women to bargain more effectively and improve their prices. The United Nations Foundation has approved a grant for the second phase of this project.

24. UNIFEM supported the movement of women into new, non-traditional activities in Africa through the Avoca Centre in Zimbabwe, which was created to facilitate training for women in the production of roof tiles and soil blocks. As a result of the skills the women acquired, numerous roof-tile and soil-block orders were placed by the private sector as well as from Agricultural Technical Extension Services, a government parastatal.

C. Engendering governance and leadership that will increase the participation of women in the decision-making processes

25. The challenges of the twenty-first century will require leadership that can provide alternative visions, values, and strategies to create a more humane world. Women's leadership is emerging to fill that need. Despite the fact that women's leadership is critical to building democratic processes and promoting social change, in virtually all countries women are vastly under-represented in leadership positions in government and the private sector. Change, however, is slowly taking place. Since 1994, 32 countries have adopted the policy of reserving a portion of legislative seats for women or of instituting some form of affirmative action, to increase women's political leadership.

26. Throughout 1998, UNIFEM continued to support efforts to engender governance processes while facilitating the development of women's leadership capacities at national and global levels. UNIFEM's governance programme is strongly informed by the recommendations of the Platform for Action, and this is reflected in the three main strategies employed to realize the Programme objectives: support for efforts by Governments to develop gender-sensitive policies, legislation and programmes at national and local levels; support for capacity-building of women and women's organizations to ensure their effective participation and influence over political processes that affect their lives; and advocacy on gender issues through ongoing analysis, documentation, and dissemination of publications, and support to facilitate the participation of women leaders at strategic mainstream conferences and international forums.

27. UNIFEM is providing significant levels of support to women's organizations and networks at local, national and global levels for implementation of the Platform for Action. A regional initiative, supported by UNIFEM, in collaboration with the European Union, aims to ensure effective coordination and implementation of programmes and activities in the Western Asia region since the Beijing Conference. In its second phase, this initiative has evolved as an important mechanism for strengthening United Nations inter-agency partnerships, while also increasing collaboration with women's organizations. Implemented in Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, and Yemen, one of the results of the initiative has been official endorsement of the mandates of national women's machinery to develop gender-sensitive national action plans and ensure their effective implementation through participating ministries. UNIFEM supports other initiatives for monitoring of implementation of the Platform, in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Promoting women's transformational leadership and political participation

28. UNIFEM's support for women's leadership development has evolved and expanded in recent years, to address leadership-building challenges not only within the context of women's participation in political decision-making processes but also within all three thematic areas of the Fund's work. In seeking to broaden the concept of women's leadership development, UNIFEM has worked on the development of a conceptual framework for the Fund's work. As part of an ongoing process to build sustainable partnerships, UNIFEM initiated in 1998 a collaborative venture with the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB), to be launched with a donor round table in early 1999. In preparation for the round table, UNIFEM convened a group of women leaders in their communities to develop guidelines for a background paper on women's transformative leadership.

29. Leadership and political participation was the main programming theme for 1998 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and umbrella programmes on the subject were developed in all four subregions. A collaborative partnership between UNIFEM, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP, the Organization of American States

(OAS)/CIM, and the Inter-American Development Bank has been forged as part of this undertaking.

30. In Africa UNIFEM facilitated the development of women's leadership skills through a regional training programme implemented by the Institute for African Democracy (IAD) in Dakar, which resulted in the establishment of a Web site on African women in politics. An innovative initiative in Rwanda to establish a gender desk in the Rwandan Parliament has strengthened the political influence of women parliamentarians and serves as a mechanism for ensuring that parliamentary debates and ensuing legislation are gender-sensitive and responsive.

31. As part of efforts to strengthen women's political leadership in India, UNIFEM sponsored a debate on women in politics, to encourage political parties to translate into practice their commitment to reserving seats for women political leaders. A three-year programme, launched to empower Pacific women to become active participants in political structures and decision-making processes, has resulted in a marked increase in the numbers of women running for political office. As part of efforts to foster cross-regional learning on best practices, UNIFEM is exploring the feasibility of adapting the training manual "Women and political empowerment" for the Pacific to the region of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Facilitating gender-sensitive national planning

32. Engendering policy formulation and national development planning processes serves as an important strategy for ensuring that agenda-setting processes at national and regional levels are informed by gender-responsive analyses of development priorities. UNIFEM's support for interventions at this level has therefore been targeted to engendering policy formulation and legislative processes, and national statistical systems and national budgets. In Central America, UNIFEM, in partnership with UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and women's non-governmental organizations, supported the promotion of gender equity through a review of legislation to eliminate gender disparities and the incorporation of a gender approach into social policies at national and local levels.

33. Strengthening the gender responsiveness of national statistical systems is a key strategy for building gender-responsive policies and plans. For this purpose, UNIFEM continued throughout 1998 to support ongoing activities to encourage the collection and dissemination of gender-sensitive statistics, while also sensitizing data producers and users, so as to ensure effective tailoring of policies to meet women's needs. Strong linkages and institutional agreements have been established through this process between a range of institutions engaged in the production of valuable data for the design and implementation of gender-oriented policies and national statistical offices and women's machineries.

34. In Latin America, UNIFEM continued work on a subregional programme, with the participation of national statistical offices and women's machineries, for the elaboration of social and economic indicators on the situation of women. In Guatemala and El Salvador, the focus was on education and labour-related indicators, while in Costa Rica attention was focused on labour, education, health, political participation, and domestic violence. Another project, conducted in collaboration with UNDP, focused on comparative statistics and analysis of the condition of women in MERCOSUR countries. Handbooks and publications were produced for data users in the areas of health, education, and labour, with updated information on social and economic indicators that affect women's lives.

35. UNIFEM's work in the area of women's budget initiatives is a promising and growing field, and some important work has been done in Africa. One workshop, "Engendering budgets: the southern African experience", brought together non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, research institutions, United Nations agencies, and members of Parliament to discuss their roles in gathering and disseminating information on incorporating a gender perspective into the preparation of national budgets. Another significant way in which UNIFEM is working to support gender-responsive policy-making processes in the southern Africa region has been through the design of a follow-up programme to build on the achievements of the five-year Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Gender Programme, which officially came to a close at the end of 1997. A UNIFEM project is strengthening the capacity of the newly established SADC Gender Unit to coordinate effectively gender mainstreaming approaches and practices within the intergovernmental body.

36. In the Asia/Pacific region, UNIFEM initiated a project to gender-sensitize the 1998 Pakistan census in order to ensure that women's participation in and contribution to the national economy are accurately reflected, for resource allocation and policy formulation. It also sought to increase awareness of women's work and the importance of women's participation in and to the national and household economies. This initiative has generated a regional forum for census exercises in Pakistan, India, and Nepal, so as to share expertise.

37. UNIFEM continued work on a 1993 project to improve the availability of statistics on and sensitivity to gender issues in national statistical systems of selected Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) developing countries: India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam. A regional publication on statistics on women and men was prepared and discussed at a regional workshop, and the publication is now being finalized. Plans to replicate the project in six other Asian countries are now being developed. In the context of a gender and statistics programme of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) for Arab countries, UNIFEM supported a national workshop in Lebanon for formulation of outlines and indicators in assessing the present status in the collection of gender-sensitive statistics. UNIFEM assisted the gender task force in Lebanon to present a paper on gender mainstreaming approaches. A similar process was held in other countries of the region, with UNIFEM's input mainly focusing on Jordan and Lebanon.

Promoting women's participation in peace-building and conflict resolution

38. UNIFEM's activities continue to be informed by an understanding of the need to empower women in countries in conflict and in post-conflict transition to overcome the social, economic and psychological damage inflicted on their lives and communities. Equally, UNIFEM's support is directed to building on the opportunities provided within such environments, to expand women's participation in all aspects of decision-making processes, and supporting efforts for sustaining women's enhanced decision-making roles in society, beyond the transition periods. UNIFEM has also placed an emphasis on support to women's peace advocacy platforms, at national, regional and international levels, working to promote an expanded role for women at all levels of processes for peace-making and reconstruction.

39. In close partnership with UNDP and UNHCR, UNIFEM supported a conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, titled "Women in conflicts", which focused on conflict resolution and peace-building, reintegration of refugees, and violence against women in the 13 countries of the region. Building on the recommendations emerging from the conference, UNIFEM initiated a process to develop a programme to support women's peace-building efforts in the southern Caucasus region, working closely with UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as Governments and non-governmental organizations in the region. The resulting programme document was recently granted $US 1.4 million by the United Nations Foundation.

40. The first phase of a regional project to support the peace-building efforts of women in Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, and Sudan was completed in 1998. An evaluation undertaken jointly by UNIFEM and the Government of the Netherlands underscored the relevance of the project and provided clear recommendations for developing a second phase of the project activities. Projects that support women's peace efforts and promote gender sensitivity in peace-building processes were also initiated in Burundi and Somalia. UNIFEM further led a United Nations inter-agency mission to Liberia to identify key priorities confronting women in the ongoing post-conflict reconstruction process there.

41. In Guatemala, 1998 saw the initiation of a second phase of UNIFEM's support to the National Union of Guatemalan Women in its efforts to integrate gender-sensitive approaches into the peace-building and democratization process in that country. A seminar on the theme "Gender and ethnicity", organized jointly with UNDP, sought to engage Guatemalan women in discussions on the issue of ethnicity within the current transition process in Guatemala and to identify methodologies for UNIFEM's development work in that context. In Colombia, UNIFEM provided support for the organization of the March for Peace, which led to the establishment of a "truth forum", a platform where women could share their testimonies and discuss problems endured in silence by millions of Colombian women.

42. At the United Nations system-wide level, UNIFEM provided substantive inputs to the work of the task force established under the aegis of the United Nations Development Group to prepare a draft action plan for implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflicts in Africa. UNIFEM also contributed, through the United Nations Development Group, to a consolidated report for building a culture of peace, prepared for the fifty-third session of the General Assembly. Other collaborative opportunities initiated in 1998 included the establishment of working relations with the recently established Post-Conflict Unit of the World Bank. UNIFEM is engaged in consultations with the Unit to evolve mechanisms for undertaking joint programming initiatives in countries engaged in post-conflict reconstruction.

D. Promoting the realization of women's rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women

43. In spite of the significant advancement obtained by women in the past decade, inequality and discrimination remain major obstacles to women's full participation in the lives of their communities. Although some figures regarding basic health and education are encouraging, women continue to be the target of physical and psychological violence on a scale not known to any other group.

44. The commemoration in 1998 of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the context for UNIFEM's women's human rights activities during the reporting period. The anniversary coincided with the five-year review of the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the policy document with recommendations produced by the World Conference on Human Rights[3] and its historic recognition of women's rights as human rights and of the need to work towards the elimination of violence against women. In addition, the Commission on the Status of Women dedicated most of its forty-second session in 1998 to reviewing four key human rights-related chapters of the Beijing Platform for Action: violence against women; women and armed conflict; human rights of women; and the girl child.

45. UNIFEM strategies and activities in the area of human rights remain geared to:

(a) Promoting the realization of women's rights (civil, cultural, economic, political and social), improving women's legal and social status, and ensuring that women's rights are recognized as human rights;

(b) Building women's capacity to understand and use human rights instruments, with a particular focus on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

(c) Promoting the elimination of all forms of violence against women, since violence is fundamentally an issue of human rights.

Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women

46. Over the past two years, the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women — created at UNIFEM under the guidance of the General Assembly in resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995 — has achieved growing recognition as a multilateral operational mechanism providing financial support for international, regional, national, and grass-roots actions aimed at eradicating the pandemic of gender-based violence. In the past year, the Trust Fund's activities have acquired additional visibility due to its increased catalytic role for system-wide international efforts to eliminate violence against women and its increased resources.

47. To date, the Trust Fund has funded a total of 71 projects worldwide which address general or specific problems of violence against women, and employ a multiplicity of strategies. Some examples of results achieved: an evaluation of a project funded in Kenya indicates a significant reduction in the incidence of female genital mutilation in three Kenyan districts; a project completed in the Russian Federation resulted in a vast mobilization and education process that served to raise awareness among an estimated 5 million at-risk young women and girls to the dangers of sexual trafficking.

48. In 1998, 29 new projects were approved for implementation. Of those 29, 15 projects targeted problems rooted in specific forms of violence against women — namely, domestic violence (6 projects); health, including female genital mutilation (2); trafficking/sex workers (2); femicide (1); and violence against women in other manifestations (4). Three projects were undertaken by a central or local government responsible for gender matters, while the remaining are being implemented by local, national, regional, or international non-governmental organizations. Depending on the issue targeted, projects applied a range of strategies, ranging from awareness-raising, training for professionals, public education, including legal literacy, advocacy/intervention in the private/public sectors and servicing for victims to action-oriented research.

49. The annual income for the Trust Fund in 1998 doubled in size over the year before, to approximately $1.8 million. Fund-raising efforts must continue — not only to increase Fund size but, more importantly, to ensure that the Fund achieves a sound financial basis so as to be able to respond to demands promptly and adequately. The fund-raising strategy for the Trust Fund will be designed to be consistent with the funding strategies of the organization as a whole. At its forty-second session, the Commission on the Status of Women considered the theme of violence against women. UNIFEM took the opportunity to extend invitations to the Commission to some grant recipients to participate in a panel discussion focused on strategies for implementation of the recommendations in the Platform for Action regarding violence against women.

50. With grant-making operations and procedures in place, UNIFEM is now ready to focus on enhancing the impact of the Trust Fund on the elimination of violence against women by developing the Trust Fund as a centre for learning, devoted to the study of the pandemic of gender-based violence. The recently established "learning component" of the Trust Fund, supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, will enable UNIFEM to review, analyse, and extract important lessons from its grant-making activities and facilitate its goal of identifying the most appropriate points of intervention and best methods and practices. Under this component, a new initiative has been launched, aimed at building the capacity of Trust Fund grantees to use diverse media and new communication technologies to document their work. The project is expected to contribute to the creation of an accessible, sustainable and growing base of information on replicable effective strategies for addressing gender-based violence. The project was granted $1.2 million from the United Nations Foundation.

Inter-agency campaign on violence against women

51. In 1998, as part of its contribution to the United Nations commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Inter-agency Regional Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean picked up momentum and was joined by similar campaigns in Africa and Asia and the Pacific. The three regional campaigns share the goal of raising public awareness about violence against women as a violation of human rights and of bringing together the efforts of the United Nations system in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The regional interventions are expected to converge into UNIFEM's global efforts, including its ongoing support to initiatives under the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women.

52. In efforts parallel to its regional activities, UNIFEM sponsored global activities, such as the inter-agency exhibition entitled "A Life Free from Violence against Women" which was held from 24 November to 10 December 1998 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. With the participation of UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UNFPA, the central thrusts of the exhibit were a "Wall of shame" and a "Wall of hope", highlighting the atrocity of violence against women and the inspiring responses that civil society organizations, Governments and individuals were formulating to address the pandemic. UNIFEM also co-sponsored the Global Tribunal to Celebrate and Demand Women's Human Rights, which brought to New York during the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration cases illustrating both violations and successes of the women's human rights movement in all regions. This event was followed by an outdoor vigil, which focused on the theme "Women light the way for human rights".

Latin America and the Caribbean

53. The Latin American campaign launched at the end of 1997 built upon the momentum created by the surge of activities by women's movements on gender-based violence throughout the region during the past decade. Twenty-two Governments in the region have so far endorsed the initiative, and at least eight United Nations agencies have joined UNIFEM on activities formulated under the campaign. The campaign also received enthusiastic endorsement from national machineries and a large number of non-governmental organizations working on a variety of gender-based violence issues and unprecedented attention by the media also.

54. Activities included production and dissemination of radio public-service announcements on gender-based violence issued on 6,500 radio stations throughout the entire region. A campaign documentary produced by Gems TV, a cable network able to reach the entire continent, received an EMMY award in the "Best Educational and Orientation Programme" category. Sixteen thousand copies of the campaign magazine *Maria Maria* were printed, in both English and Spanish, and distributed in the region as well as in Africa and Asia and the Pacific.

55. Staged tribunals helped to heighten the attention of the media and the public-at-large to examples of gender-based violence, highlighting the repercussions of the abuse of women and their diminished participation in the lives of their communities. Tribunals and hearings were held during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence, which links International Day against Violence against Women (25 November) and International Human Rights Day (10 December).

56. A salient feature of the campaign in the region is the number of commitments expressed by governmental officials, which signals a strengthened political will to affect change at the legal and policy level. In Ecuador, official representatives from 18 countries signed a declaration of commitment to uphold international standards and to increase efforts to end the impunity of sexual crimes against women and girls. In Brazil, 1,200 non-governmental organizations and municipal governments throughout the country signed a Community Pact against Family Violence.

The campaign was instrumental in creating a favourable environment for new legislation to be adopted or initiated in Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Grenada, Mexico, Venezuela and the Virgin Islands (United Kingdom).

57. In highlighting the absence of adequate services to protect the victims of violence and the role of Governments in providing the necessary resources to make this possible, the campaign has served to elicit new commitments. For example, the Brazilian Human Rights Commission has included an allocation of $10 million in its 1999 budget for the establishment of shelters for victims of violence. The Governments of Grenada and Barbados have also announced the opening of shelters for battered women and their children. In Brazil, the Ministry of Health has set new standards in all public health and medical posts for the treatment of women and girls victims of violence.

58. In Africa and Asia and the Pacific, the context of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights gave special impetus to the campaign. In addition, the existence of grass-roots constituencies that have been mobilizing around the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence during the past eight years helped to amplify the campaign activities. Extensive media coverage was given to the UNIFEM campaign in those regions as well.

Africa

59. The African campaign was launched on Pan African Women's Day, 31 July 1998, in 30 countries and New York, simultaneously, under the slogan "Life free from violence against women: a key to sustainable human development". Given ongoing developments at the African Commission on Human and People's Rights and the concurrent drafting of a new protocol to the African Charter on the issue of violence against African women and girls, the media praised UNIFEM's initiative to promote a discussion on these issues as innovative and timely. Nineteen Governments in the region have already endorsed the campaign, and activities have taken place in Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

60. The African campaign highlights two thematic issues as specific concerns in the region: one is the harmful traditional practice of female genital mutilation, and the other is the situation of women and girls in armed conflict. Activities and events undertaken on the issue of harmful practices include organizing workshops to discuss the issues and reproductive rights for public awareness (in Kenya, Nigeria and Senegal). In Somalia, an awareness-raising initiative was launched to address the problems associated with violence against women in post-conflict societies. It is also important to mention campaign activities related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, since many events addressing that subject took place during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.

61. In launching the African campaign, UNIFEM formulated strategies to integrate the campaign effectively into programmes and activities of all supporting agencies and groups to maximize the impacts. For instance, inter-agency task forces were set up by subregion to coordinate their activities in line with the objectives of the campaign. As gender adviser to the resident coordinator and chair of the gender group, UNIFEM has played a pivotal role in bringing the issues of gender-based violence to the forefront of United Nations operational activities. A concept paper outlining the regional campaign was circulated to all UNDP offices on the continent, and all United Nations country teams had an opportunity to discuss the extent of their involvement. The African campaign helped to leverage additional resources from United Nations agencies and other bilateral donors.

Asia and the Pacific

62. The inter-agency campaign in Asia and the Pacific was officially launched in Manila on 30 August 1998. Regional particularities of the campaign are threefold. First, the campaign links violence issues with the problems caused by the continued marginalization of women from economic, political, and social decision-making processes. Secondly, the campaign aims to reach out to diverse groups across society in order to break the silence on the issues of violence against women, particularly within the home. Thirdly, the campaign emphasizes emerging issues in the region, including HIV/AIDS, honour killings in Western Asia, dowry deaths and bride-burning in India, and trafficking in young women and girls in South and South-East Asian countries. To date, campaign activities have taken place in Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, and Yemen and have reached a wide variety of audiences, including policy makers and governmental officials, non-governmental organizations, officials in law enforcement and private sector, artists, corporations, and grass-roots communities.

63. The campaign launching in South Asia brought UNDP and the National Commission for Women into partnership with UNIFEM. The event was designed to attract the

attention of the remaining United Nations agencies and the media and to enlist the support of the non-governmental organization community. The "India Curtain Raiser" event proved to be a solid departure point for subsequent activities. UNICEF and UNFPA joined in as partners, as did a large number of non-governmental organizations, educational and women's institutions, government ministries, and individuals.

64. In East and South-East Asia, UNIFEM is in the final stages of producing an information package, "Roadmap", which will showcase best practices against domestic violence. The package will be distributed to Governments, multilateral and bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations (national and international), private institutions, and academics for the purpose of advocacy. The package will include information regarding international standards on domestic violence and information on national legal measures to protect women against domestic violence and other relevant problems. The package will be used to promote collaborative action among actors involved in ending domestic violence.

65. As part of the campaign activities, the Philippine Educational Theatre Association went on a national tour, with a focus on family violence. In India, UNIFEM conducted gender sensitization workshops directed at police officers. UNIFEM also produced posters that aim to promote and protect women's human rights from the abuses of the police and distributed 40,000 copies in 14 official languages to every police station in the country. As a part of follow-up activities, UNIFEM is currently assisting the Police Training Institute, at its request, to develop a curriculum on violence against women, which will be introduced as a compulsory course at the Institute for every police officer.

66. In Western Asia, the campaign was launched by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan and officially endorsed by the Government of Jordan. Since the launching, the campaign has received extensive media coverage, thus breaking the culture of silence that existed before. As a consequence, issues of gender-based violence have started to be more openly discussed. In the course of the campaign in Jordan, UNIFEM organized a round table and presented a study on honour killings, funded by the Trust Fund in Support of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women.

Sharing information on successful strategies

67. UNIFEM has made various efforts to ensure that knowledge of successful strategies and interventions to eliminate violence against women is widely shared among actors working at the global, national and grass-roots levels, to maximize their catalytic impact. Preparations for a global inter-agency video-conference entitled "A World Free of Violence against Women", planned for International Women's Day (8 March 1999), have contributed to strengthened communication and facilitation of stronger or new partnerships. The video-conference, which will link the General Assembly Hall to sites in New Delhi, Nairobi and Mexico City and to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, aims to show how ground-breaking strategies adopted in all corners of the world can have a significant impact on the goal of eliminating violence.

68. In anticipation of the video-conference and in order to tap into strategies being used in this area, UNIFEM sponsored an on-line discussion group on the issue of violence against women, in partnership with the World Bank and the Global Knowledge Partnership. The discussion group brought together, through the Internet, an energetic and active virtual community, willing to share their experiences throughout the world in combating violence against women. The virtual working group has been utilized since its launching in October 1998, to exchange information and to discuss strategies for ending violence against women across geographical regions, sectors, professions, and other political and social boundaries. A booklet with a selection of the best examples being posted on-line has been prepared for distribution during the forty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Global training workshop on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

69. Nineteen ninety-eight marked a turning point for UNIFEM's work on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Utilizing the Convention as a basis for programming and one of the cornerstones for integrating a rights-based framework into its work, UNIFEM has made real strides in trying to make an international legal document on women's equality into a blueprint which can and should be used and implemented at the national level.

70. To this end, UNIFEM and the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW) Asia/Pacific co-sponsored a second annual workshop on the implementation and monitoring of the Convention. Bringing together 24 women from 11 countries reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the training provided participants with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Convention as a key organizing tool

and to learn about the advantages and usefulness of the available international standards and mechanisms in advancing their domestic agenda for women's human rights.

71. Many of the participants played a critical role in providing the Committee experts with "alternative or shadow" reports, reflecting non-governmental organization priorities and comments on their Governments' reports. Participants from Croatia who returned from the training workshop held, for the first time, a press conference and public dialogue, which included the governmental representatives they had met at the Committee session in New York, on the implementation of the Committee's concluding comments and on women's equality. The Government of Zimbabwe decided not to repeal an important law which placed men and women on equal footing, when women advocates reminded them of the importance the law had played in the Government's presentation to the Committee. Four participants from the workshop were asked to write reports on the concrete impact the Convention had had for women in their countries, to be included in a global impact study being conducted by the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat and non-governmental organization partners and supported by UNIFEM.

72. UNIFEM supported a training workshop of trainers in Barbados, the first step towards implementing a series of training workshops on the Convention for the media, judges, and non-governmental organizations in the region. In Africa, UNIFEM translated the Convention into Kiswahili so as to further disseminate it and promote knowledge of women's human rights. UNIFEM also supported a training workshop in the United Republic of Tanzania. In Asia, UNIFEM supported a new initiative of the IWRAW Asia/Pacific in South Asia, which could become a model for other regions on how to sustain non-governmental organization advocacy and keep implementation of the Convention on the government agenda.

Mainstreaming the human rights of women

73. For the past five years UNIFEM has supported the participation of women advocates at the annual sessions of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. This continues to be of critical importance. UNIFEM's support to the mentoring programme for women's human rights advocates sought to expand the capacity of a growing number of women's human rights advocates to work effectively at the Commission on Human Rights; decentralize the expertise and flow of information on how to use the human rights machinery of the United Nations to support the activities of groups in local and regional settings; and assist in the creation of a cadre of advocates that understand and monitor the work of the human rights system to implement the gender-related policy recommendations given by the Commission. For the second year in a row, UNIFEM joined the Center for Women's Global Leadership in the sponsorship of a mentoring and advocacy training programme at the Commission on Human Rights.

74. Other activities that reflect UNIFEM's involvement in activities at the global level included: preparation of a paper with recommendations to the Economic and Social Council regarding the five-year review of the World Conference on Human Rights, particularly with regard to development assistance and the right to development in relation to gender issues; participation in the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Right to Development, convened by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which has produced recommendations addressing the integration of human rights into the guidelines for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework in the context of the Secretary-General's reform process; and participation in a special project on the integration of gender into the technical cooperation programme of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

75. The commitment to increase women's understanding and knowledge of their rights is at the heart of UNIFEM's efforts to produce accessible materials that can be used by women to advocate further for the realization of their rights. In 1998 such materials included the following: *Integrating Gender: Bringing a Gender Perspective into the United Nations Human Rights System*, a guide to working with the human rights conventions and with the thematic rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights; *Commitments to Rights: A Cross-Reference Guide to the Human Rights of Women and Girls in the Beijing Platform for Action, Related United Nations Conferences and Conventions*, co-published with UNICEF and launched on schedule, before the 1998 session of the Commission on the Status of Women; and *Bringing Equality Home: Implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. This last publication, which is available in English, French and Spanish, responds to the common query into what real change the Convention can bring about to further women's equality. Other publications produced by UNIFEM regional offices and aimed at highlighting aspects of women's human rights or violence against women include a briefing kit on the trafficking in women and children, published by the Bangkok office, two major statistical compilations on rural women, and a collection of case

studies on women's right to citizenship in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

76. In the area of networking, UNIFEM worked with a broad range of regional and international women's human rights organizations in the development of a jointly sponsored Web-based information system, accessible through the Internet, on women's human rights. The system, called Women's Human Rights Net (WHRNet) will provide access to key information as well as on-line space for exchange of information and the development of advocacy strategies, institution-building, leadership development, and research and documentation on women's human rights. The project became operational in October 1998 and will be publicly launched at the time of the 1999 session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

77. The statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), adopted in Rome in July of 1998, paves the way to the creation of concrete mechanisms to try and bring to justice perpetrators of grave crimes and violators of internationally recognized human rights. The involvement of women in the negotiations leading to the drafting of the statute for ICC was critical in ensuring that gender-specific concerns were included in the document. UNIFEM provided support to the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice at ICC, a small coalition of women's rights advocates from around the world, working on gender-related issues in war and armed conflict. Support for this work ensured the inclusion of critical provisions regarding rape, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery in the ICC statute, which is a model for gender justice in its codification of crimes of sexual, reproductive and gender violence, and of processes and criteria for ensuring the capacity of the Court to implement justice for women. UNIFEM is committed to continuing its support to the group and to monitor the process towards the creation of the ICC in order to ensure that women's interests and concerns are fully integrated into the basic documents and procedures of this new international institution.

III. Supporting the United Nations reform process to strengthen gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment

78. Efforts to strengthen the United Nations system's capacity for women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming were given strong impetus during 1998. The process provided a number of entry points for UNIFEM and highlighted the serious challenges in mainstreaming for women's empowerment and gender equality. UNIFEM focused its efforts on the following key priorities: strengthening the resident coordinator system at the country level in its capacity to mainstream gender in the context of United Nations reform; collaborating with United Nations funds, programmes, and specialized agencies to share skills and perspectives, and increase synergy with a view to supporting the United Nations system in mainstreaming gender throughout its policies, programmes, and projects; and supporting the engendering of the United Nations reform process through involvement in the UNDAF and UNDG processes to ensure that gender issues and perspectives are integrated into the overall reform programme as well as into all the instruments, guidelines and strategies that are developed and implemented to support the reform.

79. UNIFEM consolidated the programme to place 10 senior UNIFEM gender advisers at the country and sub-country level, with financial support from UNDP, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Finland. By the end of 1998, UNIFEM had appointed four advisers: one was placed in Lagos to serve Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone; and another in Beijing to serve China, the Democratic Republic of Korea, and Mongolia; while two more were fielded early in 1999, to be based in Guatemala City, covering Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua; and in Kazakhstan, covering also Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Phase I will be completed with the further placement of gender advisers in Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, and Morocco, to be followed by phase II and the fielding of one gender adviser each in Africa, Latin America, and the Commonwealth of Independent States/Eastern European region. The two-phase approach will allow the programme to benefit from lessons learned in the first phase.

80. The gender advisers work in tandem with the resident coordinator to begin gender mainstreaming at the core of United Nations reform initiatives and to help implement the Beijing Programme for Action at the country level. The gender advisers will support the development of policies, programmes and strategies that fully reflect gender issues and contain objectives for gender equality and women's empowerment. They will thus help to ensure that all the thematic groups established within the United Nations system at the field level adopt a gender perspective in their work.

81. UNIFEM and UNFPA continue to enjoy close partnership under the technical support system arrangement, which was expanded and strengthened during 1998. UNIFEM continued to provide technical backstopping in gender, population and development to eight UNFPA country support teams situated through the regions.

Information-sharing is an essential activity in this partnership, particularly on issues related to gender in the review process carried out five years after the International Conference on Population and Development and in follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNFPA and UNIFEM collaborate also on a joint project in Angola, designed to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry for Women's Promotion at the national and provincial levels and of national non-governmental organizations in gender sensitization, advocacy and training.

82. In addition, UNIFEM, the United Nations Volunteers and UNDP have fielded gender specialists to strengthen support for the United Nations system as a whole in its effort to engender the United Nations reform process. UNIFEM worked with UNDP and the United Nations Volunteers to coordinate a learning/consultation/briefing for the 12 volunteer gender specialists. The gender specialists and their counterpart gender focal points convened at INSTRAW in Santo Domingo to learn and share strategies related to mainstreaming gender. UNIFEM's experience with advocacy added value to the training and created useful synergy with the work of UNDP. Evaluations indicated that both the United Nations Volunteers and the gender focal points learned a significant amount from the experience, and that for many it was a first occasion to receive background information on gender mainstreaming and the Beijing Platform for Action. As a follow-up, UNDP launched a listserve to strengthen communication and sharing of ideas and experiences among the Volunteers.

83. Under direct line 11, issued by the Administrator of UNDP in 1996, a gender facility was set up to facilitate the formulation of larger programmes that would promote UNDP/UNIFEM collaboration over a longer period. In many countries, the intent for the creation of the gender facility was captured in the different programming ideas that emerged. The use of the funds in Kenya is one such success story, where UNIFEM worked in close collaboration with UNDP and drew in other United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), to develop a programme on feminized urban poverty.

84. UNIFEM's strengths in strategic thinking on gender issues provided impetus to the process of engendering the UNDAF and other mechanisms promoting United Nations reform both at headquarters and in the field. Key to this process is the excellent collaborative working relationships that have resulted through the chairing of the UNDG Sub-Group on Gender, and through membership of many of the UNDG sub-groups at headquarters and, at the field level, the chairing of thematic groups on gender and other gender-focused groups and committees. This work has provided a basis for developing synergy between the agencies and between the divisions and units on gender, and provides a basis for enhancing cross-fertilization and exchange of experiences.

85. The UNDG Sub-Group on Gender was formed in mid-1998 and is chaired by UNIFEM. The Sub-Group's work reflects a consistent search for and identification of entry points for advocating and promoting the inclusion of gender issues and perspectives in United Nations reform. In addition, UNIFEM's participation in a number of other UNDG sub-groups helped to provide a gender analysis of the common country assessment, advocate for the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators, and draft recommendations on the gender implications of absorptive capacity, which, in turn, were brought to the Sub-Group on Gender for further input.

86. At the field level, UNIFEM has been able to take up the issues of engendering the UNDAF and United Nations reform process in strategic and far-reaching ways, demonstrating its importance as a catalyst. In Kenya, for example, UNIFEM joined with 18 other United Nations specialized agencies and funds to produce an all-encompassing UNDAF document covering 1999 through 2003, making a substantive and critical contribution that ensured mainstreaming of gender throughout the document.

87. UNIFEM's work in convening inter-agency thematic or working groups at the country level continues to be a critical vehicle for ensuring coordination and building capacity around strategies related to gender mainstreaming for gender equality and women's empowerment. Significant contributions were made to the UNDAF process and the undertaking of activities specifically related to furthering and engendering this process. Many UNIFEM regional programme advisers chair the thematic groups on gender or the alternative inter-agency committees on gender, where they exist. The close relationship between UNIFEM and the resident coordinators greatly helps in mainstreaming gender within the United Nations system, as does the effective networking within the Gender, Women and Development Working Group. Its members are active in other related work, such as the Trafficking Working Group.

88. UNIFEM's collaboration with United Nations agencies expanded in 1998 to include other partners: UNIFEM is implementing a UNIFEM/UNFPA/UNAIDS project to strengthen the capacity of women's partners and of women's organizations to recognize HIV/AIDS as a critical gender issue, act as strong advocates, and forge new partnerships between civil society, government, the United Nations and the private sector to raise awareness of the problem and

increase both political and financial support for women living with HIV/AIDS.

89. UNIFEM collaborated with UNICEF on several initiatives which furthered the understanding of a rights-based framework, including the convening of an expert consultation on preventing violence in the family. The consultation identified priority areas and common objectives for future collaboration and proposed practical strategies, at both the global and regional levels, for children's rights and women's human rights activists to work jointly to achieve common goals.

90. UNIFEM had a strong relationship with the Division for the Advancement of Women in a number of activities, most notably WomenWatch and the Violence Against Women campaign. Other activities include support to the Division on its upcoming publication, *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*, to be published in 1999. UNIFEM provided input at a preparatory workshop in Geneva, organized jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and contributed substantive information and papers on critical themes to be covered by the *Survey*, including gender and trade, gender and information and communication technologies, and women workers in the informal sector. Another area of collaboration is on the Working Group on Budget Codes of the Inter-agency Working Group on Gender Equality. The Division is commissioning a study by the Kennedy School of Government, drawing on the experiences in results-based budgeting of the United Nations system and bilateral agencies. UNIFEM has provided its expertise on the implications of gender budgeting in order to fulfil the gender mainstreaming mandates within the United Nations system.

IV. Building a knowledge base on women's empowerment and gender equality

91. UNIFEM's strategy and business plan, 1997–1999, committed the organization to strengthening its capacity to learn from its efforts and disseminate that learning. In 1998, UNIFEM focused on establishing systems to support learning that are closely linked to UNIFEM's strategic objectives. The process of becoming a learning organization requires changes in organizational culture, systems, and incentives. UNIFEM has engaged in consultations — both internally and externally — to shape a learning process that has full staff participation and a supportive infrastructure. In particular, it is seeking to align internal organizational dynamics — exploring how performance measures and incentive systems, as well as organizational structure, work processes, and technological infrastructure support learning — so that the organization's commitment to learning is sustainable and directly relevant to operational programmes.

92. The learning component of the Trust Fund and the electronic discussion list on ending violence against women were key initiatives launched in 1998 that helped UNIFEM build and disseminate critical knowledge. In addition, on behalf of the Inter-agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, UNIFEM co-manages with UNDP an initiative to collect good practices in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. The objectives of the initiative, launched in early 1998, are to demonstrate that gender mainstreaming can be effectively undertaken; to demonstrate specific, recommended ways of doing so; and to share information on an ongoing basis, both within the United Nations system and with external audiences on what each agency recognizes as "good practice".

93. UNIFEM continues to undertake evaluation in two ways. First, it continues to undertake programme evaluations. In 1998, evaluations were undertaken for the Pacific Mainstreaming Initiative, programmes in East Africa supported by the Netherlands, the UNIFEM/UNFPA Angola project etc. Results of these evaluations will be synthesized and circulated to all staff in an effort to support ongoing learning. Secondly, UNIFEM will strengthen its efforts to conduct thematic evaluations. A thematic evaluation of a key aspect of UNIFEM's work in governance and leadership will take place in 1999, as will evaluations of the regional campaigns to end violence against women.

94. UNIFEM's use of the Internet increased dramatically in 1998. As an inter-agency initiative that has received substantial visibility in the United Nations system, UNIFEM has worked closely with its collaborating partners in WomenWatch to further develop and improve the Web site. UNIFEM has taken the lead in mobilizing bilateral and private resources to support the Web site, working with the Division for the Advancement of Women to develop proposals that have received support from the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom ($150,000 over two years) and the United Nations Foundation ($650,000). The Division has taken the lead in securing contributions and participation from other United Nations agencies, with contributions received or committed by UNESCO, the World Bank and UNDP. UNIFEM now has a Web site that is managed from New York and linked to

Web sites created and managed from Bangkok and Quito. In 1999, it is anticipated that at least two more field offices will launch their own Web sites. The Web sites are effective and efficient ways of communicating with new and expanded constituencies.

95. UNIFEM's work on using new electronic communications technologies to strengthen partnerships and increase visibility has a number of spin-off effects. Of primary importance, UNIFEM is increasingly receiving requests from networks to support their electronic communications initiatives. In 1998, UNIFEM approved support for the creation of a Web site for the global campaign on women's human rights; a Web site focusing on Muslim women's rights; a Web site focused on women and trade in South-East Asia. Creating strong partnerships with these networks will expand and deepen the reach and substance of UNIFEM's work in this area. Additionally, UNIFEM has been requested to present its experience in a number of venues, including the UNFPA-sponsored workshop, International Conference on Population and Development Advocacy in the Global Information and Knowledge Management Age: Creating a New Culture.

96. A number of books were published by UNIFEM in 1998 to synthesize and make accessible the organization's experience in a number of fields. Aside from the publications in the area of women's human rights, the Latin American/Caribbean section published the fourth of its "Reflecting on experience" series, focused on analysing results of programmes conceived to eliminate violence against women. The Dakar office published a French-language book on its experiences in supporting programmes to end violence against women. The India office published a book entitled *Sustainable Interventions for Poverty Alleviation: A Best Practice Case of Gum Karaya in Andhra Pradesh, India*, with both the Hindi and English versions in the same volume.

97. Work is going forward to establish a new biennial publication from UNIFEM, tentatively titled *Progress of the World's Women*, which will examine women's progress towards empowerment and gender equality. Each volume will provide assessments of how far the policies and programmes being pursued by powerful institutions at the international, national, and local levels are succeeding in reducing barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment. Examples will be drawn from UNIFEM's field experience on innovative actions being taken by women to claim their rights and transform their societies in ways that promote sustainable human progress. An internationally acclaimed expert on gender and economic policy has begun work on the first issue, which will focus on economic equality and will contribute to the activities following up on the Fourth World Conference on Women, in 2000. Discussions between UNIFEM and the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNDP, the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat, and World Bank have taken place to ensure complementarity between various publications planned for 2000 and to ensure that the publication will be designed so as to assist gender mainstreaming.

V. Financial management

98. Total contributions from core and co-financing activities amounted to $22.7 million for 1998, as compared to $17.5 million in 1997.

99. For the year ended 31 December 1998, core contributions for UNIFEM increased by $3.6 million, or 29 per cent to $15.8 million, from $12.2 million in 1997. This increase was mainly due to the inclusion of a major donor's voluntary contribution of $1.7 million for the prior year plus $1.4 million for the current year, along with a new increase of $0.5 million from other donors.

100. On the basis of pledges received and informal discussions with donors that did not pledge, UNIFEM can expect to receive an estimated $17.9 million from 41 donor Governments in core contributions for 1999, which would represent an increase of about 13 per cent over 1998.

101. During 1998, UNIFEM continued to seek opportunities for co-financing activities, and $2.8 million and $4.1 million were received for cost-sharing and sub-trust funds, respectively. This represents an increase of $1.6 million, or 30 per cent, over the amount of $5.3 million for 1997. Firm commitments from the donors for 1999 amount to $1.3 million and $5.2 million for cost-sharing and sub-trust funds, respectively.

102. Project expenditure for regular resources increased by $3.5 million, or 53 per cent, to $10.1 million, from $6.6 million in 1997. Expenditures for cost-sharing and sub-trust fund projects increased from $4.0 million to $4.3 million in 1998.

103. Unexpended resources at 31 December 1998 totalled $17.0 million, an increase of $4.7 million over the 1997 total of $12.3 million. Of these, $15.0 million represent unspent allocations programmed for 1998 and future years.

104. The level of the Operational Reserve was reviewed in accordance with Executive Board decision 97/4 of January

1997, and the Reserve was increased to $5.0 million at the end of 1998.

Notes

[1] See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Annex, para. 13.

[3] See *Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14–25 June 1993* (A/CONF.157/24, part I).